WOMONSPACE

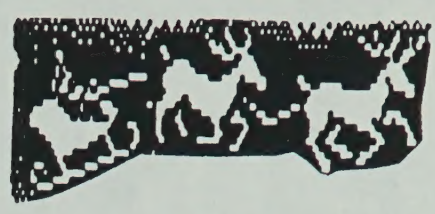
our voice in the lesbian community

NEWS

Nov - Dec

Vol.5 No.6

EDITORIAL



Here we are again, another month has rapidly flown, and we are now in the throes of preparing for Christmas. At this time of year, we become so busy with the preparations, that we forget the real meaning behind the celebration. That meaning is Peace, Joy, and Brotherly Love, or in our case, Sisterly Love.

For three days now, I have given much thought to composing this editorial, and in that time have started and scrapped at least half a dozen attempts. What words of wisdom can I impart to you, the women of Womonspace, after all, is that not the purpose of an editorial?

I guess that the main thing is the theme of Christmas. As we see it, that theme is giving. Excluding the commercial giving, which can really bog us down financially, there is the more important gift of giving of ourselves. This then is the topic I would like to address.

This aspect of the holiday is often sadly overlooked. It is something that not only can, but should be done throughout the year, and not just at Christmas time or other holiday or celebration of something.

We, the members of the Board of Womonspace, are trying to encourage and expand our role of Sisterhood, and have, I believe, been much more successful than perhaps in the past. I have seen so much more growth and openness in our group this past year, that it leaves me with a feeling of great warmth and pride in all of my sisters. Oh sure, there is still a long way to go, but the important thing is that we keep on trying and learning. Hopefully, the days of coolness and aloofness are a thing of the past, but I'm sure that there is still a lot to be learned yet and that process is often long and sometimes painful.

The one thing to remember is this is an organization of volunteers, who in the past and probably in the future also, has frequently burned themselves out, hence the feelings of coolness and aloofness. This not an excuse, merely a statement of fact. I so often hear compaints about this, and to those women I say, we're not the only ones to do for this group. Each and every one of us can give of ourselves, whether it be to a friend in need of sympathy or a shoulder to cry on, or to a new woman coming out in the community or just arriving in our city. It also applies to giving to our organization, even if all you have to give is just a few hours a month. Every hour you volunteer is very much appreciated, and it is also what keeps this group going from month to month.

Let's start the holiday season and the new year off on the right foot, and keep that spirit alive throughout the coming year. As I have said, I have seen a great deal of change and growth in our group this past year, and can only say:

LADIES KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK

Remember, we all need someone sometime. Don't be agraid to ask for help. We can't help when we don't know there's a need to be filled. We are all guilty of withdrawing into our protective and often self-destructive shells when we feel hurt or threatened. We need to overcome this if we are to grow both as individuals and as an organization. Let's get off our duffs and get out there and help each other as much as we can.

From all of us here at the offices of Womonspace, to all of you, the members, our best wishes for the Season. May you all be blessed with the very best the Season can offer, and remember:

> The most important and precious gift you can give anyone is the gift of yourself as this comes straight from the heart; a true gift of peace and love.

GOD BLESS YOU ALL!!

GATE

GAY ALLIANCE TOWARD EQUALITY

10173•104 St., EDMONTON (403)424-8361

- DROP-IN CENTRE
- PEER COUNSELLING
- SPEAKERS' BUREAU
- CIVIL RIGHTS
- SOCIAL EVENTS
- LIBRARY

Edmonton Social Services, in cooperation with Edmonton Immigrant Services Association and Operation Friendship, is initiating a knitting project for the Christmas and winter season.

We would like people to knit or crochet winter toques, mitts or gloves for needy families and newcomers to keep them warm this winter.

If your organization has a church group, seniors group, or volunteer group that would be interested in the project, please pass along this information to them. We need donations of wool as well, so if anyone has wool to donate to the project we could use this too. Free knitting/crochet patterns can be obtained by calling the following:

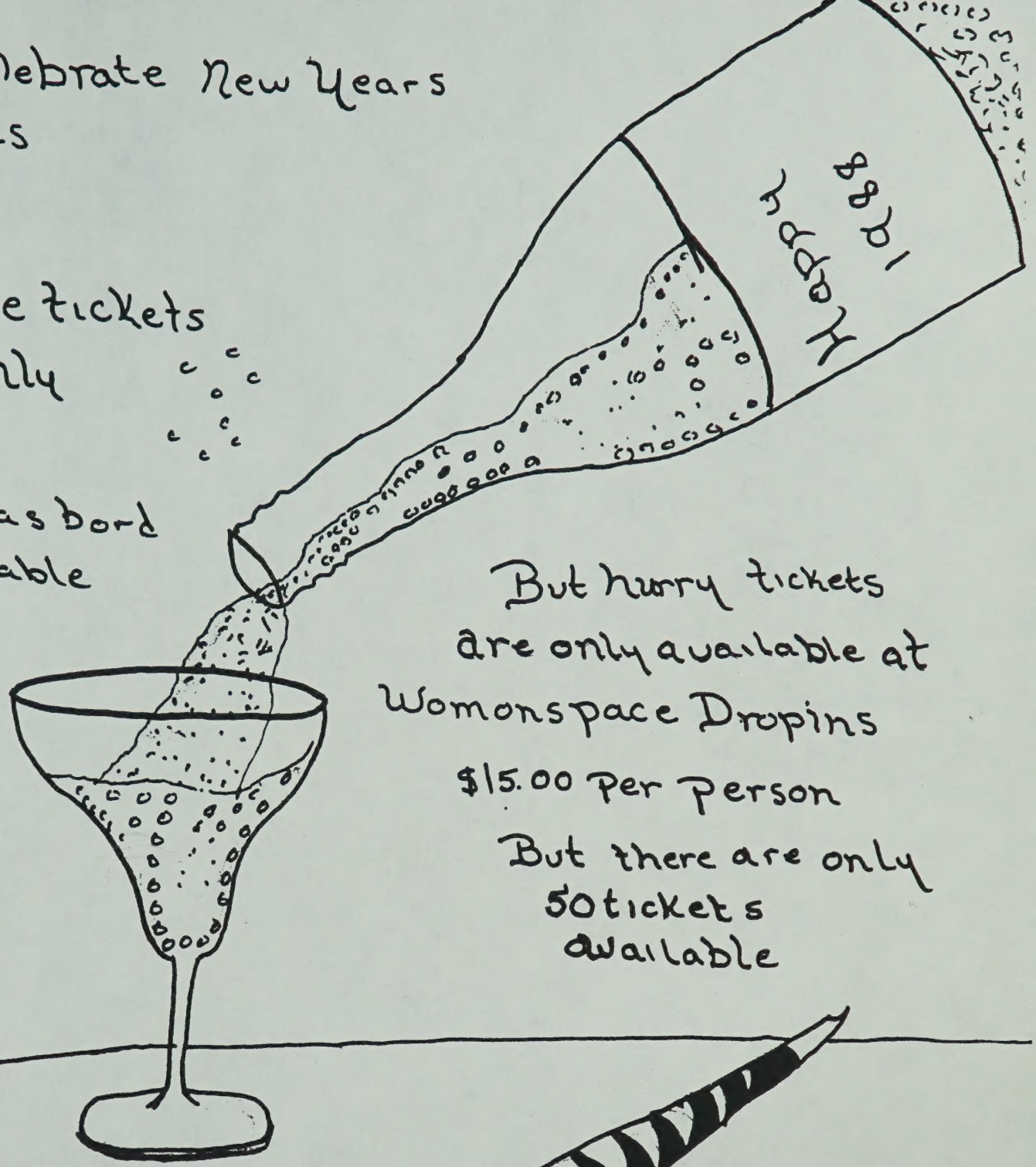
Glengarry Centre 428-2414
Westmount Social Services.....428-4967 or
Edmonton Immigrant Services.....474-8445

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Come Celebrate New Years
with us

advance tickets
Sales only

Smorgasbord
available



But hurry tickets
are only available at
Womonspace Dropins
$15.00 per person
But there are only
50 tickets
available

Doors Open at
8:00pm to 1:30 am
Paul Kane
House

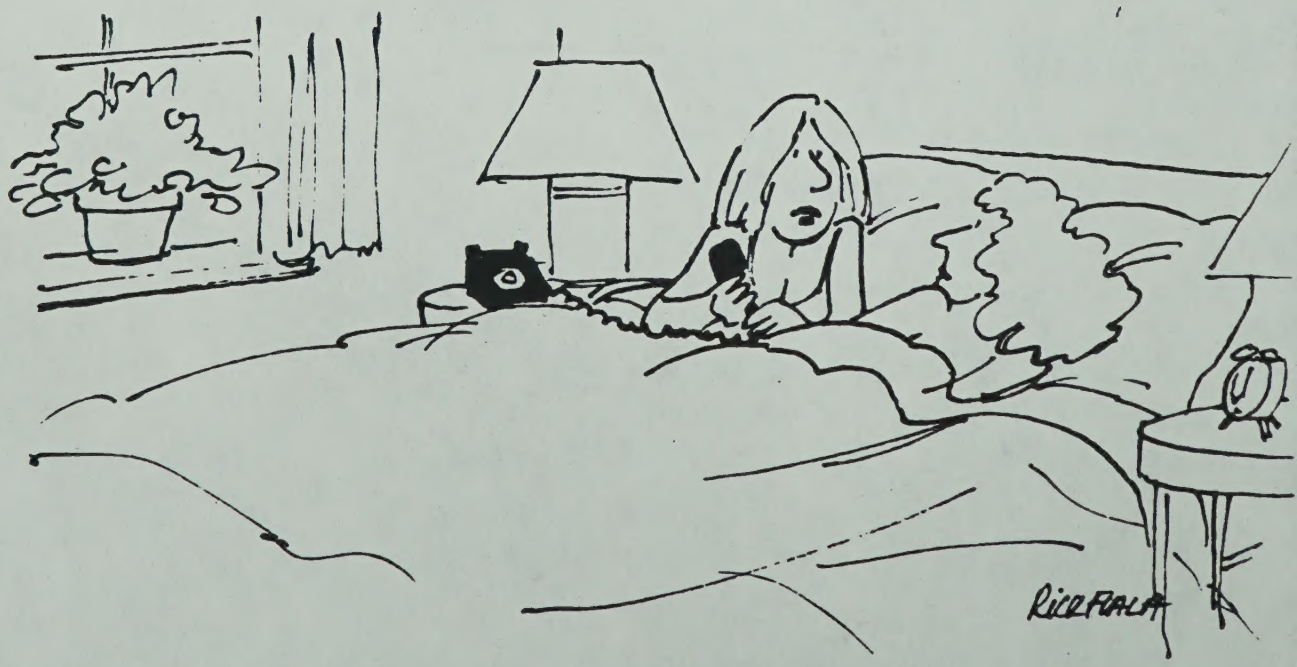
a good time to be had
by all

Creative Corner

Romanticism - "is largely responsible for keeping people in ignorance about sex and maintaining many of our most oppressive myths. Women have tolerated miserable sexual relationships, faked orgasms, and generally kept quiet about their needs, all in the name of Romantic love."

From the Feminist Dictionary

Submitted by Toni M.



"It's my parents. Quick, help me think of something heterosexual to say."

from Christopher Street Magazine

So what of being a sprout
on this long-way-down tree?

A leaf in a bud for spring
upheld at the tip of things.
The newest end of a trunk
grown knuckle-tough with traditions.

I tell you
I could endure the clutch of the ground
at the root of me.

But not without the lovely sap
which run through
dancing
warm and lovely
like spring
telling me your love is all there is.

Somehow winter does me in.

- Rita -

Green leaves in Autumn

Trees standing naked, vulnerable,
  drawing inward, waiting for the worst,
their thirst
  slaked,
patiently in line for their start-up shot of Spring,
chattering about their lost glory: gone with the wind.

Among them, a fool, unseasonable, green.
She did not speak their language.
  She said: hope, freshness, beginnings, softness.
She could not understand their words:
  Harsh reality, dying, endings.
A stranger in a strange land and
  she was so lonely.....
The naked trees discovered dignity:
  (they also serve, who only stand and wait.)
Offering reassurance, they muttered
  all will soon be green again and you'll be in step with us.
Then, at last, she knew: they were not mean, just straight
  and she'd never learn their language.

Toni M. Oct. '87

SOBER DYKE??!

I saw a "Sober Dyke" button in Common Womon Books the other day, and it got me thinking. When I first came out, sobriety and lesbianism seemed incompatible. To me, they were a contradiction in terms, because when I thought of the Gay Community, I thought of the bars.

I don't think I am the only lesbian to have thought that way, but for me, as a recovering alcoholic, this misconception was particularly frightening. I had always felt I didn't "fit in" in the straight world but I had sobered up out there. Sobriety got me in touch with my feelings, and gave me the strength to accept my lesbianism. Unfortunately, every lesbian I knew, including my lover, drank heavily. Once again, I felt I didn't fit in.

To make a long story short, I began drinking again. I made a thousand excuses to myself; "Just a few drinks to relax., I'm bored, I might as well be drunk., I've had a rough day, a drink will cheer me up., I've had a great day, I deserve to celebrate..."

Most people didn't notice what was happening to me, but as I started showing up in the wrong place at the wrong time, and as the grumblings of my roommates about my drinking grew louder, I stopped being able to accept my own excuses for drinking. I had to accept that my drinking wasn't sociable any more. I hadn't lost my job (yet), I hadn't been arrested (yet), and I was still managing (somewhat) to make ends meet financially. On the other hand, the personal and emotional aspects of my life were falling apart, and my drinking increased each week.

Once again, I had to ask for help to escape my alcoholism. It pissed me off not to be able to quit on my own. I was angry that I couldn't manage to drink socially. I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to cope without the booze. I doubted that I could stay sober. I was worried that my non-alcoholic lesbian friends think that non drinking was weird. But, most of all, I was relieved that I had somewhere to go for help.

I chose to go to Alcoholics Anonymous. The AA program has been around for more than fifty years, and offers support and suggestions for how to stay sober. There are three meetings a week in Edmonton specially for Gays and Lesbians. I need, value and appreciate the support of others maintaining their sobriety within the Gay Community.

Now, I realize that there are sober dykes in every part of our community. Some sober dykes are recovering alcoholics, others choose not to drink for different reasons. Sober dykes can be found in the bars slinging back coffee and pop instead of shooters, while others never enter the clubs. Basically, we're everywhere having the same joys, successes and failures as other lesbians, differing only in that we choose not to drink.

In case there is a not-so-sober dyke reading this, who thinks she may have a drinking problem, and who is "sick and tired of being sick and tired", I have included a list of Gay AA meetings. Please note that Tradition Three of AA states that, "The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking."

Monday	8 P.M.	St. Joseph's Cathedral Jordan Room 114 St. & Jasper Ave.
Wed.	8 P.M.	St. Peter's Church 11035 - 127 St. (back door downstairs)
Friday	8 P.M.	Unitarian Church 12530 - 110 Ave.

GAYS AND LESBIANS ON CAMPUS

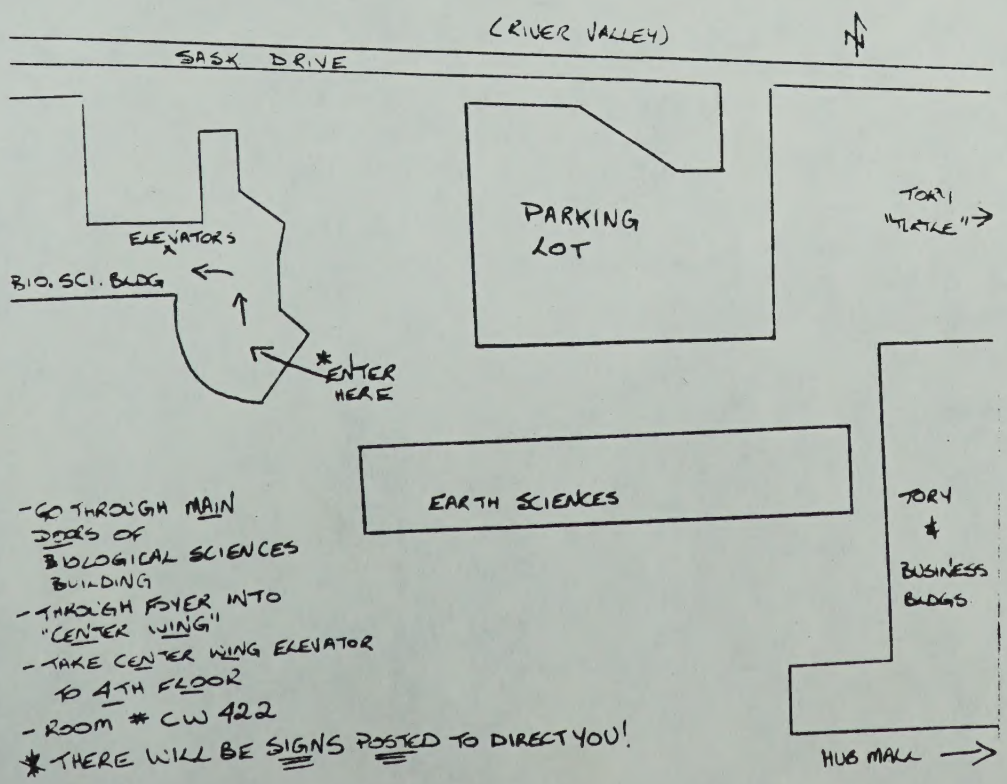
Box 75, Students' Union Building
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta
T6G 2J7

We are pleased to inform you and your organization that GALOC is operational once again for the 1987/88 university year. Furthermore, we are pleased to inform that we have a full slate on the executive as well as 32 active members.

Gays and Lesbians on Campus is an approved club open to all students, staff and faculty at the University of Alberta and our purpose is to provide for them a gay positive atmosphere and meeting place, albeit small, on campus. We are available to supply a voice on issues concerning gays and lesbians and to provide information to the university community at large about issues pertaining to gay and lesbian lifestyles. We attempt, wherever possible, to co-operate with like-minded organizations both on and off campus.

GALOC meets on the third Thursday of each month during the school year in the Heritage Lounge, Athabasca Hall, University of Alberta. We maintain an office with regular daily hours in room 620, Students' Union Building, University of Alberta and invite any interested parties to visit us there or to write to us at the address above.

We look forward to both hearing from you and working with you in the near future.



G.A.L.O.C. SOCIAL

Everyone Welcome

Dec. 9, 7-11 p.m.

Biol. Sciences Bldg.

Rom CW 442

Welcome to Metropolitan Community Church of Edmonton

We want you to know that God loves you just the way you are. Does that surprise you? Many people who join us for worship have given up on traditional Christianity. At MCCE we want to share with you the joy and love we have found with Jesus.

What's An MCC

We are a denomination of Christian churches called the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. The UFMCC began in 1968 as a group of gays and lesbians meeting in a living room in Los Angeles. It has grown to over 35,000 members, worshiping in nearly 200 churches worldwide.

You are welcomed at our services, regardless of sexual orientation, sex,race,or previous denominational affiliation. While our primary outreach is to the lesbian and gay community, our doors are open to all. You'll find gay men, lesbian women, single people, couples, parents - caring people who know that God loves every human being on earth -totally and unconditionally.

MCC Edmonton: the UFMCC affiliated church for Northern Alberta.

MCC Edmonton

- is committed to meeting human need in the name of Jesus Christ.
- is committed to and is striving to be inclusive in language and attitudes in areas of race,gender,age and sexual orientation.
- is not perfect. We are people who are learning what it is to care, support and love one another.
- welcomes you to God's love as expressed by Jesus Christ. You'll experience something different - a caring community and family.

Services

NOV 29 ADVENT I
- a)Story of Mary
- b)Friendship Sunday
- c)Choir performance

DEC 6 ADVENT II
- a)Story of Elizabeth
- b)Christmas hamper food donations
- c)Special music (soloist)

DEC 13 ADVENT III
- a)Story of the Shepherds
- b)Christmas hamper food donations
- c)Special music

DEC 20 ADVENT IV
- a)Story of Joseph
- b)Christmas hamper food donations
- c)Special music

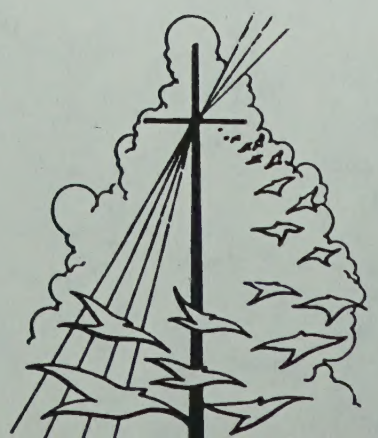
DEC 24 CHRISTMAS EVE ST STEPHEN'S COLLEGE (Lyth)
- a)Candlelight service
- b)Choir performance 8810-112 ST 11pm

DEC 27 CHRISTMAS SERVICE
- a)Special music

JAN 3 EPIPHANY
- a)Story of the Maggi

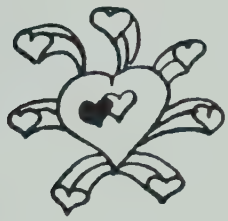
JAN 01 NEW YEARS DAY

- -Hay ride/ Chile feed
- -Time and location TBA at Church in December
- -Start your New Years right and be part of the 'family' gathering with MCC Edmonton.



CLASSIFIEDS

I am between 20-25 years old. I am looking for a long term relationship with an older female between the age of 35-45. Gray hair an asset. Please send photo & self-addressed stamped envelope. All letters will be answered confidentially. Reply to Womonspace address, Box 500.



FRAME OF MIND
FRAME OF MIND
FRAME OF MIND

- Quality and creative art framing
- Unique selection of prints and limited editions
- Wide selection of wood and metal frames

465-0534
6150 - 90th Avenue
Ottewell Shopping Plaza
Edmonton

10% off with this ad

HOURS
Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat — 9 to 6
Thurs — 9 to 9
Closed Sunday & Monday

Excitement

FOUR TYPES OF MEMBERS

This is a story about Womonspace and its four type of members. There were dances to organize and a newsletter to put together. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when actually Nobody accused Anybody.

THANK YOU - to Mary, Chris and Sandy for being so dedicated to the Newsletter. Each of you have a very special talent. Without you, I could not remain inspired.

- Candy -

THANK YOU - to everyone who took the time to visit me, or send flowers or cards during my recent stay in the hospital.

- Gerri -

Solstice Screech

An evening of humour in support of the Women's Building

Featuring

Hecate's Players
Pauline Belanger
Holly Wright
Luanne Armstrong

Friday, December 11, 8 Pm
Riverdale Community Hall
9231-100 Ave.
Refreshments, Door Prizes And Free On-site Childcare. Tickets $6/$4 Low Income. For Information Call 455-5777 Or 453-7957.

HELLO LADIES,

WELCOME TO MY COLUMN!!!

If you have any questions, problems, or just comments on anything, send them on in. I am really looking forward to hearing from you.

Please send all your questions and comments to Womonspace News
10826 - 124 St. Edtn, AB T5M OH3
Box 1020.

LOVE 'YA

AUNT AGATHA

Dear Aunt Agatha,

Recently, I have discovered that there are women in the gay community who are real sleazy. I have come to the conclusion that I could be a bit leary about getting involved in a relationship because of fear of AIDS. I want to have a long term relationship, not a short life. Is it true that women are high risk for AIDS?

Confused

Dear Confused,

AIDS is a big concern in the community, but I have it on good sources that women are not high risk AIDS carriers. As a matter of fact, we are low risk, one of the safest groups, but if you are still concerned, here are some safe sex practices reprinted out of August '87 newsletter. They are good to keep in mind even though we are low risk, safe sex is still the best option.

SAFER SEX FOR LESBIANS

SAFE SEX PRACTICES

- massage
- hugging
- dry kissing
- showering together
- erotic talk
- reading/watching erotica together
- masturbation
- dildos and sex toys (never share with partner)
- body to body rubbing (frottage)

PROBABLY SAFE SEX PRACTICES

- french kissing
- oral-vaginal contact (cunnilingus eating) outside partner's menstual period
- urine contact on broken skin
- oral-anal contact (rimming - but very unsafe for other sexually transmitted diseases)

PROBABLY UNSAFE SEX PRACTICES

- oral-vaginal contact (cunnilingus, eating) during partner's mentrual period

UNSAFE SEX PRACTICES

- sharing needles
- sharing dildos and sex toys (without separate condoms)
- sharing piercing/tattooing equipment, razors or toothbrushes

Hear Ye...

BOARD MEETING

Members of Womonspace Board of Directors and other interested members are invited to the following meeting(s) held at the Women's Building (10826 - 124 St.) at 7:30 p.m.

Our Next Meeting is

GENERAL MEETING

The General Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month at the Women's Building (10826 - 124 St.) at 7:30 p.m. Both members and non-members are welcome to attend.

Our Next Meeting is **Tues.,** Dec.8

DANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

If you are interested in getting involved in the planning and running of our monthly dances, then please attend our meetings held on the last Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Women's Building (10826 - 124 St.)

Our Next Meeting is **Thurs.,** T.B.A.

NEWSLETTER MEETING

If you are interested in getting involved in any of the various areas (writing, editing, collation, production, distribution, typing) please attend this meeting held at the Women's Building (10826 - 124 St.) at 7:00 p.m.

Our Next Meeting is **Wed.,** Dec.15

LESBIAN DROP-IN

Every Thursday night from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Womonspace holds a regular drop-in at the Women's Building (10826 - 124 St.) in the main meeting room. Joinus this Thursday for a relaxed evening of coffee and conversation. **All are welcome!**

PLEASE NOTE:

Articles published in Womonspace News do not necessarily reflect the policies and opinions of Womonspace.

WOMONSPACE DANCE

DEC.19

COME & DROP OFF A GIFT OR FOOD STUFFS FOR THE LESS FORTUNATE

BONNIE DOON HALL
9240 - 93 Street

8:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m.

ADMISSION — MEMBERS $ 6.00 NON-MEMBERS $ 7.00

"WOMONSPACE NEWS"
10826 - 124 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5M 0H3
☎ 453-7937

Credits

CONTRIBUTIONS: Mel, Chris, Toni M., Rita

TYPING: Candy, Mel

PRODUCTION: Candy, Mary, Sandy A., Chris Q.

DISTRIBUTION: Candy, Sandy, Mary

Judy at work
427-4681